Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile

Bí bródúil as do theanga

An Fhuinneog Ghaelach

Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile

Geimhreadh 2008

1-06-2008

Breithlá speisialta !

Ag deireadh téarma a h-aon i mí Márta, bhí ceiliúradh ag Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile i gclub na gCeilteach. Bhí oíche shóisialta againn thuas staighre ar leibhéal a dó. Ar dtús chan an cór "Ar Aghaidh leis an Astráil", ansin "Amhrán na bhFiann" agus "Preab san Ól".

Thug Stanley McGeagh agus Nóirín Uí Chatháin agallamh beirte dúinn a bhí an-suimiúil, sin é "An Taistealai". Cuireadh scannán greannmhar ó TG4 ar siúl agus bhaineamar taitneamh as.

Labhair Siún Uí Mhaolomhnaigh linn ansan. Fuair sí amach go raibh breithlá speisialta ag Nóirín cúpla lá roimhe sin. Mhol sí Nóirín agus léirigh sí dúinn conas a chabhraíonn Nóirín linn ó bhliain go bliain.

Tar éis sin bhí bia blasta agus ól againn agus císte breithe álainn in ómós do Nóirín. Nuair a bhíomar críochnaithe ghabh Nóirín buíochas linn agus bhronn an t-Uachtarán Deirdre Uí Ghiolla Easpaig bláthanna uirthi.

Ina dhiaidh sin d'imríomar cluiche bingo. Ansin d'inis Nóirín scéal dúinn a chum sí féin, "Micheál Mór" - mír a dó den dán.

Ag deireadh na h-oíche chan an cór "Amhrán Dóchais" agus "An Seanracht". Dúirt Nóirín gur ceart go mbeadh an dá amhrán náisiúnta agus an dá amhrán sin ar eolas ag gach éinne.

Carol Uí Cheallaigh.

Go maire tú an chéad !

Key Dates for June and July 2008

6th - 9th June	Winter school in Sydney
10th June	Nominations open for AGM
24th June	Last class of term 2
1st July	AGM (see announcement in this issue)
8th July	no class
15th July	Teacher meeting
22nd July	First class of term 3

Information given here about term dates is for students in Victoria only. Interstate students should check with their local teacher.

www.gaeilgesanastrail.com

San Eagrán Seo..

Breithlá speisialta ! 1

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Second day in the new job !

Brian smiles for Journalists as he arrives at Stormont for a recent economic Forum. Read his inaugural speech as Taoiseach to the Dáil on page 3 inside

Learning a language – as easy as ABC ?

Detailed information about the CEF levels can be found on the internet

The definition of 'fluent' is really tied into what you are using the language for.

Conversation, while important, is only part of the overall picture.

Students who come along to our weekly classes often ask how long it will take to learn Irish and how they can track their progress.

The question of how long really depends on how much effort you put in but the tracking of progress is more easily explained. The Council of Europe has done a lot of work over the last few years in harmonizing the various ways that languages are taught and how standards are applied.

Look on the internet for documents relating to the Common European Framework (CEF) for the whole story. What follows here is just a brief introduction.

The CEF recognizes six levels of attainment from A1 up to C2, and each level specifies in some detail what you have to be able to do in the language. These levels have also been given names for ease of reference. Conversation, while important, is only part of the overall picture.

It is further intended that any educational body or organisation invloved in teaching a European language, including Irish, should be using a syllabus derived from these levels.

This ensures that a certificate in French (say) from an institute in Dublin is just as good as a similarly named one from an institute in Sweden. It also ensures that student articulation between courses in different countries or regions is straightforward.

The following descriptions will help to clarify what the CEF levels mean and how they align with the exams that most of us will already be familiar with.

A1 (Breakthrough) This is the lowest level and is typically marked by a certificate of achievement or a similar document.

A2 (Waystage) This corresponds to what is known in some education systems as a junior certificate.

B1 (Threshold) Corresponds roughly to an Irish school leaving certificate at ordinary level.

B2 (Vantage) Corresponds to an Irish school leaving certificate at advanced level, or year twelve here in Australia. The SCG qualification in Irish that is now needed for primary school teachers is also set at around this level.

C1 (E.O.P.) This is equivalent to a University honours degree in the language, and obviously requires full time study. People who have reached this level would be capable of using Irish all day every day.

C2 (Mastery) This is equivalent to a post-graduate qualification as is often required for professional translators or linguists.

Here are some things to note which may not be immediately obvious -

These are levels of attainment, not classes. So secondary school students for example would normally spend about four or five years to get to level B1. There is no single course anywhere in the world that covers all 6 levels. That would be impossible.

The definition of 'fluent' is really tied into what you are using the language for, so a certain degree of fluency in Greek (at level B1 for example) may be adequate for a holiday in Athens but would not be enough for getting a job there (B2). Still more fluency would be needed for translating books (C1) or for specialist jobs like the drafting of legislation (C2).

Adult education classes such as ours are of course limited to one evening per week and very few students have time to spare beyond that. But you can still expect to reach level B1 or beyond after sufficient study. This will allow you to read most books and newspapers, listen to broadcasts and take part in conversations. Some adult students who do have the time to undertake additional private study, perhaps with a tutor, and working from a planned syllabus, would be capable of going on and reaching level B2.

For the next stage, going from B2 to C1 you would need to allow for a period of at least a year to live and work/study in an environment where the language is used, eg a Gaeltacht. This is considered normal for all university students these days when doing modern languages, and is no different for adult learners.

The final stage, known as C2, is not needed by the majority of people unless your job involves using language in some very specialised role.

The National University of Ireland at Maynooth (NUIM) is now offering examinations for adult learners at each of the first four CEF levels, and the remaining two will be available at a future date. It is known as the Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) or European Certificate in Irish. For more information see the last issue of our newsletter or visit the website **www.teg.ie**

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Speech By Brian Cowen in the Dáil following his election as Taoiseach:

Aithním gur mór an onóir dom oifig an Taoisigh a ghlacadh inniu agus glacaim go humhal leis. Is ócáid mhór é do mo chlann, do mo chéile, Mary, agus mo bheirt iníon Sinéad agus Maedhbh, do mo mháthair May, do mo chlann agus gaolta uilig. Táim fíorbhuíoch do lucht tacaíochta an rialtais a roghnaigh mé don phost mórchúramach seo.

Nuair a chaithim súil siar ar na hIartaoisigh a bhí i réim sa tír seo ó bhunaíodh ár stát, is maith is eol dom an dea-obair atá déanta acu i leith na tíre. Tuigim go maith go bhfuil an cúram céanna ormsa agus ar mo chomhleacaithe sa rialtas.

Táim an bhródúil as na gaiscí atá déanta ag saoránaigh na tíre seo, sa saol i gcoitinne. Tá clú agus cáil ar ár scríbhneoirí, ár gceoltóirí, ár luthchleasaithe agus uile, ar na mílte ón dtír seo a thaisteal an domhan agus a thaispeán a gcuid talann. Tá daonra an-óg againn sa tír seo agus tá cumas iontu.

Tuigimid go bhfuil fadhbanna agus deacrachtaí le réiteach againn agus geallaimse daoibh go ndéanfaimid ár seacht ndícheall chun na fadhbanna a shárú. Is dúshlán é dúinn go léir. Tá an-chuid cainte faoi drochstaid eacnamaíochta na tíre seo, ach an bhfuil dearmad déanta againn ar an bhforbairt atá déanta againn le blianta anuas. Caithfimid a admháil go bhfuilimid níos fearr as ná mar a bhíomar. Caithfimid bheith réalaíoch.

Níl aon amhras orm ach go bhfuil sé de dhualgas orainn na fadhbanna sóisialta atá againn a réiteach. Beidh sé mar ceann spíce againn cabhair a thabhairt dóibh siúd atá ar imeall ár sochaí. Ní mór dúinn aire, urraim, meas agus cion a thabhairt dár seanóirí agus a chinntiú nach mbeidh saol ainnis, dearóil, uaigneach acu amach anseo.

Fadó bhíomar ag brath ar eachtrannaigh chun an tír seo a fhorbairt, ach anois tá pobal oilte againn agus níl drugall orthu a dtalann a léiriú. Deirtear go bhfuil mí na meala thart dom anois – is fada an lá ó bhí mí na meala agam, agus nílim ag súil leis sa saol polaitíochta. Tuigim go bhfuil jab le déanamh ag an bhfreasúra agus fáiltímid roimh cháineadh dearfach.

Is beag maitheas atá i gcáineadh diúltach. Táimid uilig ag obair ar son na tíre. Maidir leis na meáin, tabharfaimid gach cabhair díbh. Níl ach rud amháin ag teastáil uainn, sé sin, cothrom na féinne a thabhairt dúinn inár saol poiblí agus go háirithe inár saol príobháideach. Glacaimid le cáineadh ach iarraimse oraibh é a bheith féaráilte.

Thósnaíos mo óráid i nGaeilge mar is é mo bharúil ná gur seoid luachmhar í ár dteanga agus caithfimid í a chaomhnú agus a fhorbairt. Cé go mbeadh lucht na díspeagach againn i gcónaí, measaim féin go bhfuil dea-mhéin i leith na teangan i measc an phobail anois. Níl aon bhata draíochta agam, ach tá spriocanna ós ár gcomhair. Ní foláir dúinn misneach a thabhairt do mhuintir na Gaeltachta agus na Galltachta agus a chur in iúl don phobal go bhfuilimid bródúil as ár dteanga. Ní ceart go mbeadh náire orainn í a labhairt go poiblí. Cén fáth nach féidir linn bheith dhá-theangach?

Níl bás na teangan mar rogha againn agus déanfaimid sa rialtas gach iarracht ár dteanga a choimeád beo agus a chothú.

Celtic Soiree

Winter Solstice Celebration
at St Carthage's
123 Royal Parade, Parkville

Sunday July 6th at 7:30 pm

featuring

Lynne Muir : dulcimer
Robyn Payne : guitar
Willowmavin Quartet led by composer, Robert Soutar
Hughes-Norwood Family ensemble performing "Songs of the Diaspora"

Admission $15/$10 concession
pay at door

Further information from the Celtic Club Cultural Heritage Committee

ph (03) 9670 6472
email info@celticclub.com.au

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Carty's Party !

Come and celebrate as well known guitarist Tommy Carty is inducted as a "Legend Of The Lake" at Mickey Bourke's Koroit Hotel

Saturday July 5th at 6:30 pm
featuring
Award winning band "Rant"
And a mighty music session led by Tommy & Paddy Fitzgerald

Meal and Entry $20

Contact Felix on 0413 801 294
Felix@bushwahzhee.com

Songs And Stories From The West Of Ireland

featuring

Mossie Scanlon : acclaimed singer
Greg Hunt : mandolin and fiddle

and

Mary Kenneally : poetry and storytelling

The Celtic Club 320 Queen Street
Sunday July 13th at 2:pm

Admission $15
Drinks available at bar prices

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Cruinniú Bliantúil 2008

Toghchán an Choiste le haghaidh na bliana 2008

Annual General Meeting and Election of Committee of Management 2008/09

7:30 pm Tuesday 1st July, First Floor, Celtic Club

BUSINESS

Opening remarks, apologies

Minutes of previous AGM

Matters and correspondence arising from previous AGM

Receive Annual Reports from President, Vice-President and Treasurer

Election for Office Bearers and Committee Members

General Business and then any other business of which prior notice has been given

Refreshments

Financial members with enthusiasm, organisational skills, practical abilities, creative concepts and constructive ideas who are willing to put in time, effort and direct action to help administer the day to day affairs of the Cumann are requested to nominate for a position on the 2008/9 Committee.

Nomination forms are available from the Secretary, Justin Cartwright. jcartwright@nuw.org.au

All current financial members are eligible to nominate, attend, and vote at the AGM. Membership may be renewed immediately prior to the AGM if you have not done so already. Financial members eligible to vote but unable to attend may obtain a postal vote from the Secretary. Nominations for the positions of Office Bearers and Ordinary Members of the Committee will open on Tues 10th June 2008 and will close prior to the AGM on Tues 1st July 2008.

Nominations may be lodged with the Secretary either in person or by mail and may be accompanied by renewal of membership.

REMEMBER—You must be a current financial member to nominate, attend and vote

Scoil Gheimhridh, Meitheamh, 2008

Thart ar ceithre scór, idir óg agus fásta, a d'fhreastail ar an 6ú Scoil Gheimhridh ag an Chevalier Resource Centre i Sydney ag an deireadh seachtaine, 6ú -9ú. Thángamar ó gach aird den tír. Tá ard mholadh tuillte ag an bhfoireann nua a d'eagair an scoil i mbliana. Chuaigh gach rud ar aghaidh bonn ar aon.

Thug an t-Ambasadóir, Máirtín Ó Fainín, léargas dúinn ar staid na Gaeilge in Éirinn faoi láthair agus é ag oscailt na scoile go h-oifigiúil. Dúirt sé gur féidir linn bheith dóchasach fúithi agus go raibh Gaeilgeoirí na hAstráile páirteach san dul ar aghaidh sin.

Díreach ina dhiaidh sin labhair an t-Ollamh Anders Ahlqvist, Professor of Celtic Studies ag Ollscoil Sydney faoi na teangacha Cheilteacha. Gaeilge Ghriandóite a bhí mar ábhar ag aoi cainteoir eile,Dr Val Noone, oíche Dé Sathairn agus a spreag a lán díospóireacht.

Ar ndóigh ba iad na scoláirí agus na múinteoirí croí na scoile agus bhaineamar go léir tairbhe agus sult as na ranganna, an craic agus an cairdeas eadrainn.

Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís!, Siún.

In excess of 80 people of all ages attended the 6th Winter School at the Chevalier Resource Centre in Sydney on the recent long weekend in June.

All corners of the country were represented. Full marks to the new organizing team this year, it all went like clockwork.

Ambassador Máirtín Ó Fainín reported on the status of Irish back in Ireland at present when he performed the official opening.

He said that we could be optimistic about it and that the Irish speakers in Australia were part of the bright future.

Immediately afterwards we heard from Professor Anders Ahlqvist the new head of Celtic studies at Sydney University.

On Saturday evening Dr Val Noone spoke on "sunburnt Irish" a topic that generated much discussion.

Of course it's the students and teachers who make up the school and we all came away better educated as well as entertained.

Till next year, when we'll be looking forward to doing it all again !

Learning Irish surrounded by twenty three beaches - can it be true?

In this issue we talk with Michael O'Rourke, president of the Irish Australian Club in Wollongong.

FG Many thanks for taking the time to talk to *An Fhuinneog Ghaelach*. First of all, for those not familiar with the area, can you tell us how big Wollongong is and where it is situated ?

MO Wollongong is a city of approx 200,000 people. It is situated about 100km south from the centre of Sydney and about an hour's drive to the airport. It is a coastal city with a backdrop of the mountains known as the Escarpment. There are roughly 23 beaches which are patrolled during the summer months by lifeguards.

FG Are there many people there of Irish descent ?

MO Roughly 20% would be Irish heritage or first and second generation.

FG How did the idea for the classes originate ?

MO The original language classes were started by Sean McKeogh at his home in central Wollongong and they had several pupils namely Cormac O'Connor, Sheila Ferguson, David Ferguson (RIP), and Ann Dorahy (RIP).

After some years the classes moved to the home of Ann Dorahy, where they continued for some time under Cormac O'Connor, Sean having gone back to Ireland. After a lengthy period Cormac handed over to Keith Conroy who continued in that role until the classes ceased.

FG How long have the current Irish classes been running and how many people attend ?

MO When I took up the presidency of The Irish Australian Club Wollongong in 2000 I decided to start up a choir and an Irish class both of which started in 2001 and are running to this time. Keith Conroy agreed to be our teacher. We are very happy here and all the students enjoy coming to class at this modern facility. We meet each Wednesday from 10.00am till 12 noon and have a cuppa during the morning. In the event of Keith's absence, Fr Michael O'Sullivan gladly helps out by taking the class. The class is made up of some people from the Sydney class who travel down each week and have lunch afterwards in the local leagues club. This makes it a nice social day. We also have some locals coming originally from Ireland, some native Aussies and some English and Scottish people.

FG We've been told the classroom facilities that you have are quite impressive. How did that come about ?

MO Our class name is Ranganna Na Gaeilge Wollongong (R.N.G.W.) and our lessons were first conducted on Wednesdays in the Country Women's Association building. After a couple of years this building was condemned by the city council and all were asked to move to alternative accommodation.

Our class moved to the Ribbonwood centre in Dapto, a suburb of Wollongong and we have remained there now for nearly 6 years. It is a modern building and has great facilities which we can avail of.

FG How much contact do you have with Irish language groups elsewhere in NSW and do you use the same books and syllabus ?

MO We are close to all the Irish groups in that we meet twice a year at the summer and winter schools and have wonderful times, it is a great way to meet new friends. As to the syllabus and books used I would say that they are similar in all states.

FG Your group organised the Daonscoil here in Victoria for 2006, and it turned out to be very successful. How difficult was it to do all the organising from interstate and would you attempt something like that again ?

MO In 2006 as you say the Daonscoil was run by R.N.G.W. and organising it from interstate was not difficult.

However I must say that without the services of the volunteer teachers that all the organisation in the world be to no avail.

I would like to say thank you to one and all of the volunteer teachers at these schools as they are not paid for their time and effort except that the students appreciate and are aware of what they do and that without them the schools and classes would come to an abrupt ending.

FG People say the internet has been a lifeline of sorts for Irish speakers outside Ireland. Do you agree with this ?

MO As to the usefulness of the Internet to Irish speakers outside Ireland I have no doubt that this is the case and I personally will make better use of it in the future.

FG In Ireland the Gaeltachts are shrinking but Irish seems to be growing in popularity in cities and towns elsewhere. Where do you think Irish will be in fifty year's time ?

MO I feel that it will grow strongly and that when you travel on a crowded bus anywhere a nice thought would be that the people would all be speaking Gaeilge. Wouldn't that be great !

FG And what are your long term plans for your group ?
MO I am hoping that some of the younger set will take positions on the committee and grow our group in particular in the language, sports, singing and dancing areas.

The Gong is definitely worth a visit at any time of year

FG Finally, for anyone in the Wollongong area who might be interested in learning Irish or improving what they have, how can they get in contact with you ?

MO For any persons wanting to know more about learning or improving Irish or just brushing up on their conversation we are very interested in hearing from you. Contact us on 0414 659 634 or email abdist2@ozemail.com.au

Lastly, I would like to thank *An Fhuinneog Ghaelach* for this opportunity to make your readers more aware of what we at R.N.G.W. are doing and if anyone is passing through the area then please do drop in and say hello.

Beidh fáilte romhat !.

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Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile Teo

Éarlamh: Máire Mhic Ghiolla Íosa

IRISH LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Patron: Mary McAleese, President of Ireland

Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile, the Irish Language Association of Australia is a non-profit organisation run entirely by volunteer tutors and a voluntary committee of management. Its aim is to promote the Gaelic language as a second language within the Australian community, and to form networks with other cultural, heritage and Gaelic-speaking groups.

Formally established back in 1992, the ILAA offers structured weekly language classes to students of all ages, nationalities, and walks of life, across a range of levels — absolute beginners, basic, intermediate, advanced — as well as the opportunity to practice and converse together in a supportive environment.

Members receive a quarterly newsletter; access to the library; and also enjoy weekly singing and informal conversation sessions; as well as participation in social events and residential language schools.

Irish Language Association of Australia Inc., 320 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC, 3000.

Annual Membership Application or notification of change of address, telephone number, mobile, email.

[ ] New Membership [ ] Renewal [ ] Update

Sloinne ..... (surname)

Céad ainm ..... (first name)

Seoladh ..... (address)

.....

Guthán bh) ..... (phone)

ah) .....

Fón ..... (mobile)

Ríomhphost ..... (email)

Membership fee is $30 per annum and due each January. Class fee is $3 per week.